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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 28 | Min 17 | Humidity 48% Mostly sunny Sensex 84,675 | Nifty 25,938 | Gold 1,36,148 | Silver 2,24,116 | Dollar 89.86 | Euro 105.71 | GBP 121.05

KINDNESS MISPLACED

Animal activists pick holes in civic body's dog adoption appeal as it entails relocating strays, forcing them to adapt to new way of life

PAGE 3

FAREWELL 2025

A look at some of the memorable moments of this year through BM's stories and a recap of what was good and what was bad

PAGES 6&7

Case of pervert secretly recording women on Church Street once again raises concerns over misuse of smartphones, highlights restrictions women constantly under surveillance face

SHOOT AT SIGHT

Need of the hour: Stricter enforcement of existing laws, collective responsibility

| Rachana Ramesh
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

"Indian law does recognise a person's right to privacy. Filming someone surreptitiously, particularly with an intent to invade privacy or harass, can fall under provisions of the Information Technology Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)

—Sandeep Kulkarni, advocate

An incident on the busy Church Street has once again raised concerns about women's safety and privacy in public spaces. Over the weekend, a man was allegedly seen recording women on his mobile phone as they walked along the popular pedestrian stretch. The behaviour was noticed by passersby, who said the filming appeared deliberate and targeted, leaving several women visibly uncomfortable.

According to eyewitnesses, the man was angling his phone in a manner that suggested he was secretly recording them. When some people became aware of his actions, he reportedly turned away and left the area before he could be confronted. A bystander, who later described the incident online, said the experience was "deeply unsettling" and highlighted how quickly such situations unfold in crowded public places.

Women's rights activists say such incidents are becoming increasingly common with the widespread use of smartphones and social media. "Recording someone without consent, even in a public place, is a violation of their dignity and personal autonomy," said a Bengaluru-based women's rights advocate. "The fear is not just about being filmed, but about where that footage might end up and how it could be misused."

Legal experts point out that non-consensual recording

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

Clinging on

Grass patches, ancient trees in and around Devanahalli Fort are home to at least 9 species of lizards

| Garima Prasher
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Apart from its historical and archeological significance, here is yet another reason to restore and conserve centuries-old Devanahalli Fort in North Bengaluru.

Researchers from Bangalore University have found that the heritage site, birthplace of Tipu Sultan, is also home to at least nine species of lizards, and thus patches of grass and ancient trees in and around the Fort are of immense ecological significance.

"Our survey was conducted during a brief period, and we thus believe that there are more than nine lizard species in the Fort area. Given the species richness, the fort should be restored and conserved as it will have an indirect positive impact on the area's biodiversity," said S Rajashekara of the Department of Studies in Zoology, Bangalore University.

The survey to estimate population density and species richness of lizards in the fort, spread over an area of about 8 hectares, was conducted from February to May 2018. Apart from nine species belonging to seven genera and four families, as many as 152 lizards were recorded from 11 sites of Devanahalli Fort.

Researchers say lizards maintain ecosystem balance as they form a vital link

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Wizarding wonders

Lahe Lahe Caravan is presenting 'Harry Potter Book Discussion', a meetup by Sonali Bhatia, for hard-core Potterheads aged 12 and above. The event brings a chance to enter the wizarding world and share your thoughts and insights. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 4, 2.30 pm**

02 Eternal bond

Kalagangotri Team is presenting 'Sooji Mallige', a heartfelt social drama filled with emotion and values, narrating the tale of a couple— two lives intertwined, walking hand in hand through the journey of togetherness. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: December 31, 7.30 pm**

03 To new beginnings

SOCIAL invites guests across its outlets pan-India to ring in the New Year with SOCIAL ANIMALS, a concept built around the idea that no two people party the same way. **Where: All SOCIAL outlets; When: December 31, 7 pm**

04 Sonic fireworks

Windmills welcomes the New Year with an electrifying live performance by Thermal And A Quarter (TAAQ), promising a high-energy celebration that blends rock, blues, funk, pop, and retro influences into a powerful, groove-driven experience. **Where: Windmills, Whitefield; When: December 31, 9.30 pm**

05 Fatherhood follies

Jaspreet Singh will be taking the stage to talk about his wildest job yet - being a father, navigating his innate irresponsible nature to the absurdities of modern parenting, in a show about men, fatherhood, love and loss.
Where: Alliance Francaise, Vasanth Nagar; When: January 31, February 1, 8 pm

Chalking it up to poor enforcement

Citing previous lapses, parents from Karnataka say Delhi's new fee rules for private schools should serve as wake-up call, as without proper implementation even strongest laws risk becoming hollow promises

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As school fee hikes continue to burden parents across India, Delhi's newly notified School Fee Regulation (SFR) Act, 2025, has reignited a national conversation on private school accountability. The Act seeks to bring transparency and checks on arbitrary fee increases by mandating fee regulation committees, compulsory audits, public disclosure of financial statements, and grievance redressal mechanisms for parents. It also aims to curb profiteering by private unaided schools and strengthen government oversight over fee structures.

While the new act has been welcomed by many, some parents in Karnataka think that passing a new law alone will not fix the problem unless governments show the will to properly enforce existing rules. In Karnataka, the Voice of Parents association (VOP) has reacted to the Act with caution, based on years of legal struggles and court orders that were never fully implemented in the state.

Sharing his views, Sijo Sebastian, Joint Secretary of VOP, said, "As a parent, I have reviewed the details of Delhi's School Fee Regulation (SFR) Act, 2025. My view is that the real need is not a new law, but the government's willpower to enforce the rules already in place." He said that most provisions in the SFR Act already exist under various Central and State regulations.

Lapses in enforcement

He pointed to a CAG report which revealed that during COVID-19, private schools in Karnataka allegedly overcharged parents by Rs 345 crore, despite clear government circulars and High Court orders in 2020 and 2021. "Why did this happen? Has any action been taken?" asked Sebastian. Court-ordered fee caps allowing schools to collect only 85 per cent of tuition fees for 2021, and earlier a government order permitting only 70 per cent of 2020 tuition fees to be charged during 2021 were rarely enforced, he said.

He cited multiple instances where DERA committee findings, audit reports showing fund misuse, capitation fee bans under the Karnataka Act of 1984, and RTE Act provisions were allegedly ignored.

Describing the toll on parents, Sebastian stated, "I have personally fought 12 High Court cases and 3 lower court cases due to a single school's violations and government inaction. Should a common parent have to go this far to secure a child's rights?" Drawing parallels with recent land encroachment cases, he added that the education sector is plagued by a similar malaise, where rules exist, but enforcement does not.

Calls for action

According to VOP Karnataka, Delhi's Act should serve as a wake-up call, not a template alone. Their core demands remain clear: strict enforcement of existing laws, time-bound action on violations, empowered regulatory bodies, and relief for parents without forcing them into prolonged litigation. Without that, they warn, even the strongest laws risk becoming hollow promises.

Chidananda PE, Vice President of the Karnataka Private School and College Parent Associations Coordination Committee (KPSCPACC), said that parents have been raising these demands for the past couple of years, but despite multiple changes in education ministers, there has been no serious effort to implement a fee regulation mechanism.

Instead of new laws, real need of hour is ensuring compliance with existing rules, says parents' association joint secretary

"If the Karnataka Education Act of 1983 is strictly implemented, most issues will automatically fall in place. All boards CBSE, ICSE and others must follow state rules," he opined. He said that the Act clearly mandates the formation of elected parent committees empowered to make decisions, but most schools have not constituted a proper parent-teacher association. "There is still no cap on school fees, and unchecked hikes continue year after year. This reflects a complete failure of the Education Department to enforce the law," he added.

18,496 voters finalised for B'luru Teachers' Constituency elections

The final electoral roll for the Bengaluru Teachers' Constituency has been published, with a total of 18,496 eligible voters, said M Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority and District Election Officer. He said the list was prepared as per the Election Commission of India's schedule, with November 1, 2025, as the qualifying date. The draft roll was released on November 25, 2025, and claims and objections were invited till December 10. After scrutiny of applications received, the final voters' list covering 28 Assembly segments within the GBA limits has now been notified. Special Election Commissioner R Ramachandran said eligible teachers who were missed in the final revision can still apply for inclusion up to the last date for filing nominations, adding that voter registration and updating names is a continuous process. **— BMB**

Big housing push for community workers

The Karnataka Housing Board has moved the state government with a proposal to provide subsidised housing to community workers across the state, offering one lakh residential sites and 10,000 affordable homes under the Chief Minister's 'Namma Mane' scheme. A KHB official said, "The project, pegged at Rs 8,778.50 crore, aims to meet rising housing demand driven by urbanisation and growth, with the board planning to fund the scheme largely through its own resources and bank loans if required. The proposal includes revising 298 older housing projects approved between 2007 and 2021 that are yet to be implemented, and rolling out a fresh housing programme from 2025–26 after securing government approval."

Under the plan, one lakh sites measuring 6 m x 9 m will be offered at 50 per cent subsidy, along with 10,000 affordable 2BHK flats in multi-storey complexes for workers such as auto and taxi drivers, garment and factory workers, mechanics, electricians, barbers, delivery agents, street vendors, plumbers, welders, construction workers, anganwadi and ASHA workers, gardeners, painters, laundry workers, vegetable vendors, cinema and theatre staff, and other informal sector employees. The board estimates it will need 3,302 acres of land across 31 districts to develop the sites and plans to complete the project within three years. Officials said a demand survey will be conducted before implementation, and the proposal is currently under government scrutiny, with approval expected soon. **— BMB**

Smart cards planned to plug Shakti scheme misuse

More than 2.5 years after the Shakti scheme was rolled out, the Transport Department is planning to introduce smart cards for women commuters to curb misuse and ensure that only eligible beneficiaries avail free travel. A proposal seeking cabinet approval has been readied, officials said, noting that the government has already tightened checks across its guarantee schemes. An official said, "The move to issue smart cards under Shakti scheme is aimed at ensuring that the benefit reaches only women residents of Karnataka, amid complaints of non-eligible and even out-of-state passengers travelling free."

Applications are likely to be enabled through the Seva Sindhu portal, on the lines of Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyothi schemes. Officials said discussions are also on whether the cards will be free or fee-based, and whether women without smart cards in the future may have to buy tickets, as the state looks to reduce disputes and tighten beneficiary verification. **— BMB**

Traffic nightmares on ORR set to end soon

After nearly four years of disruption, daily commuters on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) stretch between Mahadevapura and Iblur are finally seeing signs of relief, as Metro civil work at road level moves closer to completion. Progress on this stretch has been noticeably faster compared with other ORR sections, bringing hope to thousands who travel this corridor every day.

According to the Mahadevapura Task Force (MTF), Metro civil work on the ORR began in mid-2021 and significantly altered the commuting experience. Narrowed roads, frequent diversions, traffic bottlenecks, dust and poor air quality became part of daily life for office-goers and residents. Service roads, which bore the brunt of diverted traffic during construction, deteriorated badly, especially after heavy rains from 2022 onwards.

The good news is that most of the Metro civil work at road level between Mahadevapura and Iblur is nearing completion. Commuters are beginning to notice gradual improvements. Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has started cleaning and restoration work along the corridor, signalling the end of the most disruptive phase. In parallel, the Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) project team has taken up the restoration of footpaths and the asphalting of service roads.

Asphalting work is currently under way on the service road stretch from Karthik Nagar to E-Zone Club and Kalamandir. At the same time, kerbstone fixing and the resetting of paver blocks are also being carried out.

"The pace of work here has been encouraging, and people are finally seeing the results. For years, commuters suffered due to poor road conditions and delays. Now, with service roads being asphalted and footpaths restored, daily travel is slowly becoming smoother and safer," said Clement Jayakumar of the Mahadevapura Task Force.

While service road work is progressing well, the main carriageway still awaits full restoration. "There is an ongoing discussion on whether BMRCL or the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) will take up this work. Officials have indicated that complete asphalting of the main road will happen only after station construction is finished.

Until then, BMRCL is carrying out patchwork repairs to keep the road motorable, though motorists continue to face difficulties on damaged stretches," he added. Metro station-related work is still ongoing near Marathahalli and Karthik Nagar stations. Once these works are completed, authorities say the remaining service road restoration will also be taken up. **BMB**

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Activists demand in-situ care for dogs

Welfare advocates argue relocation may backfire, calling for scientific, humane strategies prioritising health, vaccination, and permanent residency

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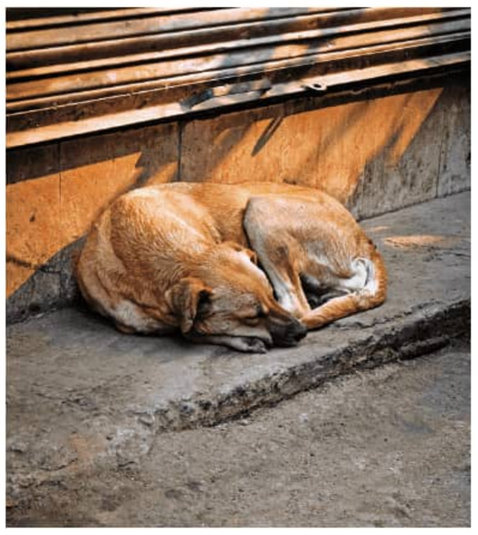
Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) Commissioner DS Ramesh's appeal to the general public, residents' welfare associations and voluntary organisations to adopt community dogs found in and around institutions such as educational establishments, hospitals, railway stations, bus stands, playgrounds and other public places, in accordance with the guidelines of the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), received a mixed response from animal activists and the general public.

According to the 2023 street dog survey, approximately 59,820 street dogs have been identified within the Bengaluru East City Corporation limits. In addition, about 369 street dogs have been confirmed within the premises of various institutions under the City Corporation's jurisdiction. To control and ensure the welfare of street dogs, the City Corporation is continuously implementing animal birth control (ABC) programmes, vaccination drives and veterinary services. The street dog adoption programme is not merely an animal welfare initiative; it is a symbol of the city's social responsibility and strengthens partnerships between citizens and the local administration.

The Commissioner stated that the objectives of the street dog adoption programme are to provide street dogs with a safe and improved living environment, create harmonious human–animal coexistence in the city by controlling the street dog population, safeguard public health and safety, and prevent cruelty to animals while promoting animal welfare. The BECC is set to provide complete health check-ups, necessary vaccinations (anti-rabies and combined vaccines) and sterilisation surgery under the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme for street dogs. However, animal activists expressed concern about the condition of street dogs if they are relocated on the pretext of adoption. "I oppose this because it would be difficult for street dogs to survive or adapt in new locations where they are relocated. I prefer appealing to educational institutions and other organisations to look after the dogs at the same locations," said Arun Prasad, an animal activist.



Officials cite surveys, sterilisation plans and health checks, while campaigners argue relocation harms territorial animals and push in-situ care, breeder regulation and shared civic accountability

Stating that the BECC Commissioner's appeal highlights a fundamental conflict in urban animal management: the tension between clearing public spaces and the practical reality of where these animals can actually go. Nevina Kamath, Secretary, Action for Animal Justice, said the solutions offered reflect several core challenges in canine welfare policy for 2025.

"The East Corporation's dual approach creates a 'closed-loop' problem. Removing dogs from one public facility only to ask another to take them in acknowledges that these animals have a right to exist, but fails to provide stable ground for their residency. Adult street dogs are highly territorial and adapted to specific environments. Relocating street dogs often backfires, creating 'vacuum effects' where new dogs move in or relocated dogs face stress and aggression. Experts now advocate in-situ management—caring for dogs in their original areas through community feeders and institutional support.

Animal activist Nandita Subbarao noted adoption challenges, as most prefer puppies or pedigree dogs over adult indies, stressing the need to regulate breeders under the Breeding Rules, 2017. SPCA member Sujaya Jagadish urged municipalities to focus on sterilisation, vaccination, and community participation, rather than overburdening rescuers.

Priya Chetty Rajagopal highlighted government and corporate efforts, citing the CJMT Million Indies Homed (MIndie Project) launched in December 2024 and successful adoption drives at Cubbon Park, which found homes for several pups.

WhatsApp threats trigger dog mess war

A tussle is ongoing between pet owners and the Elita Promenade Apartment Owners' Association over the issue of cleaning dog faeces. The matter has created animosity between the two parties and eventually reached Puttenahalli Police Station when one of the association members sent a WhatsApp message to a pet owner, instructing them to clean up dog faeces.

Puttenahalli Police registered a non-cognisable report on December 17, based on a complaint lodged by Savitha Bhavsar. "KC Ethiraj, a pet committee member, has asked me to clear the dog faeces even though her dog did not defecate. He sent a photo of another dog's faeces on WhatsApp to my mobile. I request you to summon those harassing me to the police station and warn them not to harass me," the NCR read.

Speaking to Bangalore Mirror, Savitha Bhavsar said that she has been residing at Elita Promenade Apartment for 13 years and has been personally targeted for standing up for the right causes. "After a case of illegal fining was highlighted and the Chief Veterinary Officer from the Animal Welfare and Husbandry Board was called, I was and continue to be personally targeted for standing up for the right causes. We have had rules framed before and have been abiding by them as extensively as possible, yet some of us get targeted simply for being the voice for the helpless," Savitha said.

WhatsApp harassment

She said that she had received personal direct messages on WhatsApp asking her to pick up faeces left by other dogs/pets in the same community. "I have always been vocal and action-oriented about issues related to pets/animals, not just in our community but outside as well. I have been accosted on my walks, asked to clean faeces, and cornered, being told I am not allowed—and will not in future be allowed—to walk on these pathways within the community. I have been waylaid while getting into my car in front of neighbours and friends, being told to go and pick up faeces. I had to write to the CVO GBA/BBMP regarding the harassment. Unfortunately, the CVO was busy and could not instantly help, after which I had to file an NCR at Puttenahalli Police Station," she said.

Bharathy, a resident owner, said a beautiful and peaceful apartment complex with wonderful people has suddenly turned hostile due to a certain set of residents who now hold power—a situation that had never occurred in more than a decade.

"It is very unfortunate that some people, who are at the helm of affairs this year, are creating a pet versus non-pet divide and breaking the spirit of the community.

A simple meeting with the pet-owning residents could have resolved this, but unfortunately, it has now become an ego issue. Whenever a woman raises a complaint with the authorities, she is viewed as doing it for publicity, and anyone supporting her is also targeted by the same individuals through their allies in groups, for anything that is stated," she said.

Association responds

Rangarajan S, president of Elita Promenade Apartment Owners' Association, said the secretary submitted a complaint to Puttenahalli Police Station. "The Association has introduced some guidelines. All residents must follow the guidelines," said Rangarajan.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

Same apartment, multiple sale agreements shocks buyers

Repeated sale agreements for identical flats expose regulatory gaps and alleged corruption within sub-registrar offices, prolonging suffering of innocent homebuyers

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In the shocking incident of a builder entering into sale agreements for the same flat with three prospective homebuyers is anything to go by, the homebuyers have to be cautious while entering into such dubious agreements with greedy builders. It is quite shocking and amusing to come across financial institutions, including nationalised banks, sanctioning housing loans without bothering to do the mandatory due diligence. As usual, the employees at respective Sub-Registrar Offices are ever ready to register sale deeds due to the reasons best known to them. The employees at the Sub-Registrar Offices facilitate to register as many as sale agreements on the same property if the sale agreement documents have different details on the size of of carpet area.

The authorities at the respective Sub-Registrar Offices do not ask queries about the veracity of the sale agreement. They go ahead with their job of registering the sale agreements if there is a slight difference in the size of carpet area. For example, a sale agreement was made between Vani Shelters and Raghavendra KA for the flat No. A-301, a three-bedroom and kitchen flat. The carpet area mentioned in the sale agreement is 916 sq ft. The sale agreement was registered on November 29, 2019. Again the builder entered into a sale agreement with Sudhir for the same flat and the sale agreement was registered on August 20, 2022. The carpet area mentioned in the sale agreement is 1159 sq ft. Prior to this, the builder entered into a sale agreement with Madhan J for the same flat and the sale agreement was registered on March 14, 2022.

Victims demand police investigation into fraudulent registrations; (Below) Agreement papers reveal same apartment sold to multiple buyers

SCHEDULE-'C' PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the **Flat bearing No.A-301, Block 'A' in Third Floor, 3 BHK** with Carpet Area of **1159 Sq.Feet as per RERA of 1290 Sq.feet,** in the building, known as **'SRI VANI ORCHIDS'** along with One Covered Car parking space in the Stilt Floor of the building, along with right to use common passage, common areas such as stair case, lobbies, lifts, and other common areas. The building is of RCC roofing, Vitrified flooring, Honne and jungle wood is used for doors and windows with electricity, water and sanitary connections.

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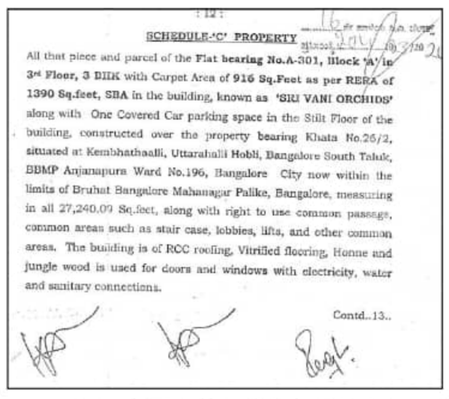

SCHEDULE-'C' PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Flat **bearing No.A-301, Block 'A' in 3rd Floor, 3 BHK** with Carpet Area of **916 Sq.Feet as per RERA of 1390 Sq.feet,** SBA in the building, known as **'SRI VANI ORCHIDS'** along with One Covered Car parking space in the Stilt Floor of the building, constructed over the property bearing Khata No.26/2, situated at Kembhathaalli, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, BBMP Anjanapura Ward No.196, Bangalore City now within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagar Palike, Bangalore, measuring in all 27,240.09 Sq.feet, along with right to use common passage, common areas such as stair case, lobbies, lifts, and other common areas. The building is of RCC roofing, Vitrified flooring, Honne and jungle wood is used for doors and windows with electricity, water and sanitary connections.

Contd..13..

According to the documents available with Bangalore Mirror, the builder entered into a sale agreement with Sudhir N for B-306, a two-bedroom and kitchen flat, and the sale agreement was registered at BTM Layout Sub-Registrar Office on February 11, 2020. Later, it was found that the builder entered into a sale agreement with Harsha for the same flat and the sale agreement was registered on March 28, 2022. When questioned, the builder agreed to allot a 3BHK flat (A-301) and entered into an agreement with him on August 20, 2022, and cancelled the sale agreement entered with him on February 11, 2020.

Speaking with Bangalore Mirror, Sudhir N said that the apartment complex (Sri Vani Orchid) was under construction and the builder promised to hand over the flat by December 2020. "My aim was to have a shelter in Bengaluru. I paid money to the builder expecting him to handover the flat by December but he is not available. I paid Rs 23.50 lakh (including EMI and down payment). I want authorities to help me and others who got cheated", Sudhir N.

> **"My aim was to have a shelter in Bengaluru. I paid money to the builder expecting him to handover the flat by December but he is not available. I paid Rs.23.50 lakh (including EMI and down payment)**
> – Sudhir N (Homebuyer)

Meanwhile, Karnataka Home Buyers Forum Convenor Dhananjaya Padmanabhachar said that a Sub-Registrar registering the agreement for sale of the same property to multiple buyers is very unfortunate. "A detailed investigation is needed by the police in this case to find out the involvement of the Sub-Registrar in cheating home buyers".

Rail projects get deadline warning

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has directed officials to speed up land acquisition for new railway projects, warning that delays will not be tolerated. The state has already released ₹2,581.67 crore for project execution and ₹2,950.22 crore towards land acquisition. Of the 16,554 acres required for approved rail projects, around 84% has been acquired, with nearly 2,685 acres still pending. With the Centre setting January 31, 2027 as the deadline, officials cited land acquisition issues and technical challenges for slow progress. Projects under review include Tumakuru–Davangere, Kudachi–Bagalkot, Belur–Hassan, Shivamogga–Ranebennur and Dharwad–Belagavi, the last expected to halve travel time. — BMB

Minister seeks multiple Vande Bharat trains

Karnataka Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Dakshina Kannada district incharge, Dinesh Gundu Rao, has urged Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw to introduce multiple daily Vande Bharat Express services between Bengaluru and Mangaluru to boost regional development and ease business travel.

In a letter dated December 19, 2025, Gundu Rao said the state government is focusing on developing tier-2 cities into modern work and industry hubs to reduce pressure on Bengaluru and ensure balanced growth across Karnataka. Highlighting Mangaluru's strengths in education, commerce and culture, he said the city has strong potential to emerge as a viable alternative to the state capital. However, he pointed out that the absence of fast and reliable transport has hindered Mangaluru's growth. At present, professionals and businesspersons often spend entire days or travel overnight for brief meetings, leading to loss of productive time.

To address this, Gundu Rao proposed Vande Bharat services departing from Mangaluru at 4 am, 10 am and 6 pm, with same-day return services on weekdays. He said such connectivity would greatly benefit professionals, entrepreneurs and investors. He added that improved rail connectivity would strengthen exchanges in healthcare, banking, commerce and industry, while also encouraging national and international travellers to access facilities in Mangaluru. He expressed confidence that occupancy would remain consistently high, calling it a collective demand of coastal Karnataka. — BMB

HC moots temple sandalwood cultivation

The Karnataka High Court has asked the State government to examine whether temples and other religious institutions can be allowed to cultivate sandalwood for ritual requirements. The direction came from a bench led by Justice Suraj Govindaraj while hearing a petition by Sri Krishna Math, Udupi, which sought assured sandalwood supply for traditional practices. The temple said it earlier received sandalwood free, a practice later discontinued. The State cited conservation laws and limited availability. The court suggested self-cultivation on temple land could ease forest pressure. It directed the Forests Department to study feasibility and frame policy, while existing application procedures continue. — BMB

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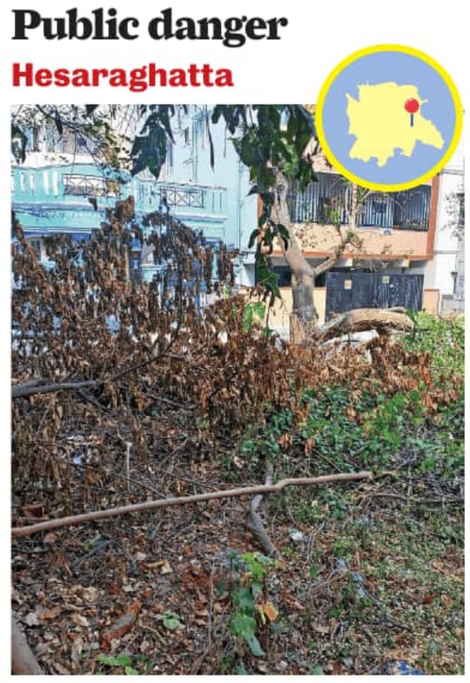
Hygiene crisis

Indiranagar

At the junction of 6th Main and 13th Cross in Indiranagar, sewage has been overflowing from a manhole for over 10 days, severely disrupting pedestrian movement and posing serious hygiene and public health concerns.

Public danger

Hesaraghatta



On 10B Main in AGB Layout, debris from a fallen tree has remained uncleared, posing a serious risk as poisonous snakes have taken shelter beneath it.

Urgent repair

Vidyaranyapura

A broken footpath slab at a bus stop on Vidyaranyapura Main Road near a bank poses a serious risk to pedestrians and requires immediate repair.

Man jumps to death from office building

A 26-year-old employee of a leading biotechnology company died by suicide after jumping from the fifth floor of the company's building in Electronic City Phase 1 on Tuesday afternoon.

According to police, the deceased has been identified as Ananth Kumar (26), a resident of Banashankari. He had been working in the accounts section of the firm for the past six months.

The incident occurred at around 2.45 pm, when Ananth reportedly went to the fifth floor of the office building and jumped under circumstances that are yet to be determined.

Colleagues rushed to his aid and took him to a nearby hospital. However, doctors declared him brought dead.

No suicide note was found either at the spot or in his belongings. The exact reason behind the extreme step remains unclear. Police officials said they are analysing Ananth's mobile phone and questioning his colleagues, friends and family members to ascertain whether he was facing any personal or professional issues.

The Parappana Agrahara police have registered a UDR and have taken up further investigation.

The body was sent for postmortem examination, and a case has been registered as per procedure. **BMB**

Police inspector booked for dowry harassment

A police inspector attached to Sadashivanagar Police Station has been booked on charges of dowry harassment, physical assault and criminal intimidation following a complaint filed by his wife at the North Division Women Police Station.

The accused has been identified as Girish BP, while the complainant, Kavya, alleged that she and her children were subjected to repeated physical abuse and dowry-related harassment over several years.

Based on her complaint, the police have registered an FIR against Girish and his relatives under relevant sections of law.

According to Kavya, her husband frequently assaulted her and their children, often while under the influence of alcohol. She alleged that he once attacked their daughter with a cricket bat and also assaulted family members using a glass bottle. She further claimed that the abuse had continued since 2017 and was accompanied by persistent demands for dowry.

In her complaint, Kavya stated that at the time of their marriage around 15 years ago, her family spent nearly Rs 30 lakh, including 250 grams of gold jewellery and Rs 5 lakh in cash. She alleged that an additional Rs 10 lakh was later paid to the inspector, but despite this, he continued to demand more money.

The complainant also accused her husband of threatening to have her killed through a relative if further dowry was not paid and alleged that he was involved in an extramarital relationship. Further investigation is underway. **BMB**

Gang brutally assaults man in public, six held

A man was brutally attacked by a gang of around 9 individuals in Banashankari 3rd Stage on Sunday night, leaving residents shocked. A CCTV video of the assault has since gone viral on social media, capturing the horrifying attack.

According to police, of the nine accused, six accused identified as Mohan, Venkatesh, Chandan, Girish, Suri, and Ganesh have been arrested and were later produced before the court.

The footage shows the victim, identified as Basheer, stepping out of a black-and-white car when the group of men, armed with rods and machetes, surround the vehicle. They are seen smashing the car windows as Basheer tries to retreat back inside. Despite his efforts, the assailants drag him out and assault him, leaving him with visible injuries on his face and body.

Following the incident, an FIR has been registered, and police have launched a detailed investigation. Police officials are scrutinising the viral CCTV footage to identify the remaining attackers and trace their movements. Police officials explained that the attackers, who had been involved in a long-standing dispute since 2023, targeted the victim to exact revenge. Further investigation is underway. **BMB**

Double jeopardy

A bike rider, who was caught for drink and driving (DD) by the Byatarayanapura traffic police station Kavika Junction, set fire to his bike after the bike was seized and parked in front of the station on Saturday night.

Cylinder blast at PG: Owner, manager booked

An FIR has been registered by the HAL police a day after a cylinder explosion at a paying guest (PG) accommodation claimed the life of a techie and left three others injured, with the building owner and manager booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

The accused have been identified as Vishnu, the owner of the building, and Roja, who was locally managing the Seven Hills Sai Co-Living PG near Kundalahalli. Police said preliminary investigations pointed to gross negligence on their part in maintaining the premises, which allegedly led to the fatal incident.

According to the police, the explosion occurred around 6.15 pm on Monday in the G+6 building housing the PG, which has 43 rooms. Fire and thick smoke engulfed the building following the blast of a commercial Bharat Gas cylinder, triggering panic among residents.

The blast claimed the life of Aravind (23), a native of Ballari and a senior analyst at a private firm in Bengaluru. Three others: Venkatesh (28) from Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh, Vishal Verma (23) and CV Goel (25), both from Uttarakhand, sustained injuries and are undergoing treatment.

A senior police officer explained to the media that the gas leak was reportedly noticed as early as 2 pm but was allegedly ignored. There was also no proper ventilation in the building. Two commercial gas cylinders and one domestic cylinder were found at the spot. Both the accused have been taken into custody for questioning, and further investigation is underway. **BMB**

Man beaten to death with hammer following drunken brawl

A 31-year-old labourer was allegedly beaten to death with a hammer after a drunken brawl at a construction site in JP Nagar 8th Phase on Sunday night. The deceased has been identified as Bhagirath Bapri, a native of West Bengal.

According to the police, the incident occurred at an under-construction building where both the victim and the accused were working and residing. The accused, Biplab Mandal (27), also a native of West Bengal, had joined work at the site about a month ago. On Sunday night, the two reportedly consumed alcohol together after work. An argument broke out between them over a trivial issue, during which Bapri allegedly abused Mandal's mother in foul language, police said.

The verbal quarrel soon escalated into a violent altercation. In a fit of rage, Mandal allegedly picked up a hammer lying at the construction site and attacked Bapri, inflicting fatal injuries. Bapri collapsed and died on the spot. The incident went unnoticed through the night and came to light the next morning when other labourers arrived for work and found Bapri lying dead.

Based on the information received, Konanakunte police rushed to the spot, conducted an inspection and registered a murder case. The body was sent for postmortem examination. Police later tracked Mandal down and took him into custody for further questioning. Further investigation is underway to ascertain the exact sequence of events leading up to the murder, police said. **BMB**

Beat cops under scanner for alleged extortion

A social media post that went viral claimed two beat policemen have landed in trouble for allegedly harassing four men returning home late at night in Byappanahalli and forcing them to pay Rs 500 for "venturing out" in what the policemen claimed was a "sensitive area".

The incident reportedly occurred on Sunday night when the four men booked a cab from Indiranagar to Byappanahalli. After alighting from the cab and walking towards their residence, they were intercepted by two beat policemen in Sadanandanagar.

According to the victims, the policemen questioned them for being out late at night and claimed the locality was under "high alert" following a robbery reported last month.

Despite the men explaining their identities and the reason for their presence, the policemen allegedly refused to let them proceed.

The policemen reportedly threatened to book them under provisions of the Karnataka Police Act and warned that a Hoysala patrol vehicle would be summoned to take them to the police station. To make the threat appear official, the policemen allegedly produced an old form dated 2022.

The victims claimed the policemen initially demanded Rs 1,000, which was later negotiated down to Rs 500. The amount was allegedly paid on the spot to avoid further harassment.

The entire exchange was recorded on a mobile phone, and the victims later posted the video on social media, tagging the Bengaluru City Police. Following the post, senior police officials said an inquiry has been initiated and details have been sought from the complainants. **BMB**

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The General Public is hereby informed that, our clients intends to PURCHASE the immovable property, which is more fully described in the Schedule Property hereunder from present owner i.e., **Mr. M.V. NANDA KUMAR,** Son of late Mr. M.N. Venkata Ramaiah, residing at No.142, 3rd Cross, Ganesha Temple Road, Kammanahalli Main Road, Bangalore 560084.

Any persons, financial institutions having any sort of claim / rights / interest / charge on the below said property or any objections for the said sale of the property may file their objections in writing along with supporting documents, addressed to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, it shall be construed that there are no claims of any sort over the below said property and our clients shall be advised to proceed with the proposed transaction. Any claims thereafter shall not be entertained.

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ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF the immovable Property Survey No.67/6, Old Sy. No.67/4, measuring 16 Guntas, out of 38.08 Guntas, situated at Kannur Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore District and bounded on the:

East by : Property belonging to Mr. Venkateshappa;
West by : Property belonging to Mr. Marehalli Devappa & Mrs. Dodda Puttamma;
North by : Road;
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As always, this year too, Bangalore Mirror didn't just write about problems. We made sure that those in power sit up and take notice and act on citizens' demands to make lives more liveable and convenient

Cityscape on BM's pages: Stories that spark change

In 2025, Bangalore Mirror proved that journalism isn't just about headlines; it's about results. Our reporters went beyond the story, taking issues from streets, lakes, and schools directly to the authorities. Roads were paved, lakes cleaned, and safety hazards addressed. BM didn't just cover Bengaluru's problems; we made the city respond. We will continue driving ground-level reporting and real reforms in 2026.

We brought you a bird's eye view of the city, through thick and thin of 2025

Police Accountability

Bangalore Mirror

Police accused of trying to put lost label on snatched phone

Internal inquiry ordered after family alleges police reluctant to register FIR when senior citizen was robbed of her phone during morning walk

May 18, 2025

After highlighting how police allegedly tried to dismiss a stolen phone complaint, officials personally visited the victim's home to record the complaint, leading to the arrest of the accused. This story showcased BM's ability to hold law enforcement accountable while ensuring justice on the ground.

Carmelaram Road Work

Bangalore Mirror

Carmelaram's wait for smooth roads continues

Stalled road works, flooding, delays, land issues continuing, residents appealing officials for progress, proper planning, improved safety, smoother commute

November 7, 2025

Residents had long endured stalled infrastructure and waterlogged roads. Following BM's coverage, authorities swiftly tarred and opened the crucial 100-ft CDP Road connecting Carmelaram to Sarjapur, easing traffic for thousands and improving connectivity in the growing suburb.

Bangalore Mirror

High-rise footpaths create low spirits on Mosque Road

Frazer Town residents outraged as new white-topped road and mismatched footpaths trap cars, block entries, and defy urban logic

November 19, 2025

Mosque Road Footpaths

BM highlighted unsafe roads and footpaths along Mosque Road, prompting officials to level them. The work now ensures safe access for cars and pedestrians, demonstrating the direct impact of persistent reporting on everyday urban life.

Bangalore Mirror

Flora-fauna haven Uttarahalli Lake sinks into sewage decay

Wildlife once thriving in Uttarahalli Lake is dwindling, with residents urging urgent action to restore natural habitats

September 13, 2025

Uttarahalli Lake Restoration

The neglected lake, once a thriving ecosystem, saw accelerated cleanup after BM exposed sewage inflow, plastic waste, and stalled restoration. Authorities removed weeds, trash, and debris, giving residents renewed hope for a revived waterbody.

Bangalore Mirror

As Kithaganur Lake revival drags on, optimism fades

CSR-funded restoration that sparked optimism last year now crawls, leaving residents worried about garbage, odour, weeds and persisting coordination failures

December 26, 2025

Kithaganur Lake Survey

BM coverage of delays in Kithaganur Lake's revival prompted authorities to finally commence survey work and mark lake boundaries, reigniting community hope for a restored waterbody.

Bangalore Mirror

Recurring flooding drowns Hutchins Road in miseries

Residents demand removal of silt and garbage from drains to facilitate rain water flowing into nearest stormwater drain, thus avoiding accumulation of water

June 9, 2025

Hutchins Road Flooding

BM highlighted chronic flooding and blocked drains; the railway authorities built a compound wall and Bengaluru Central City Corporation cleared choked drains, alleviating residents' misery.

Bangalore Mirror

Railways clear drain, rebuild wall

July 18, 2025

Railway Drain Action

BM coverage prompted immediate action to clear drains and rebuild protective walls, reinforcing how investigative reporting can directly improve public infrastructure and safety.

Bangalore Mirror

Pitfalls of infra work: School zone has turned hazardous

Frazer Town locals demand swift action as unsecured excavation zones threaten children, parents, and elderly pedestrians near school area

Extended parking time fails to fix airport chaos

December 27, 2025

Open Pit Safety Near School

Unsecured construction near Haji Sir Ismail Sait School posed daily risks to children. Following BM's report, the Major Road Engineering team quickly barricaded the excavation, ensuring student safety ahead of New Year celebrations.

Bangalore Mirror

Waste accumulated behind sluice gates of Varthur Lake could lead to another flooding situation, say environmentalists, who are demanding civic agencies put out details on status of rejuvenation project, money spent so far and pending work

LAKE VIEW TURNS UGLY AS TRASH TAKES OVER

BDA shifts blame onto slum dwellers for dumping waste

December 8, 2025

Varthur Lake Cleanup

BM's focus on garbage accumulation led the BDA to clear Varthur Lake, showcasing the power of sustained media attention in prompting civic action.

Bangalore Mirror

BDA clears Varthur Lake trash, activists demand lasting pollution control measures

Residents welcome cleanup drive, but environmentalists insist stopping sewage, encroachments and waste inflow is key to saving Varthur Lake

December 23, 2025

From stampede to scams: The good, bad & ugly

City reels from stampedes, assaults, cyber frauds and crime, exposing cracks in safety, governance, and preparedness

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The year 2025 will be remembered in Bengaluru not for innovation or growth, but for a series of incidents that repeatedly pushed the city into the national spotlight for the wrong reasons. From a deadly stampede during a historic cricket celebration to record-breaking cyber frauds and disturbing crimes on city streets, Bengaluru witnessed a year marked by grief, outrage and hard questions about safety, governance and preparedness.

Stadium tragedy

What should have been a once-in-a-lifetime celebration turned into the darkest day of the year. On June 4, 2025, thousands gathered near the M Chinnaswamy Stadium to celebrate Royal Challengers Bengaluru's maiden IPL title. Overcrowding, poor crowd control and alleged lapses in planning led to a stampede that killed 11 people and injured more than 50.

Most of the victims were young fans, including students and a 13-year-old girl. The incident shocked the nation and cast a shadow over the city's sporting culture. In the aftermath, authorities faced sharp criticism, and cricket fans were further disappointed when permission to host Vijay Hazare Trophy matches at the venue was denied. As the year ended, hopes were pinned on 2026 to restore Bengaluru's standing as a major cricketing hub.

Crime surge

Beyond the stadium tragedy, 2025 saw a worrying rise in violent and high-profile crimes. The city reported cases ranging from the brutal murders of toddlers to crimes against women, reinforcing concerns about urban safety. These incidents fuelled public debate on policing, social accountability and the need for stronger preventive measures.

Scenes from a turbulent year — a deadly stampede, a major cash heist, rising digital crimes and police action across the city

Filmy heist

One of the most sensational crimes of the year unfolded on November 19, when a daring daylight robbery took place in the heart of Bengaluru. In what became one of the largest cash-only heists in the city's history, 7.11 crore was looted after the accused posed as government officials. The crime stood out for its planning and execution, drawing comparisons to scenes straight out of a film.

However, the Bengaluru City Police responded with a swift and coordinated operation. Within 60 hours, more than 200 personnel tracked the suspects across multiple states.

Night assault

In April, another incident triggered widespread outrage after a woman was molested while returning home late at night. The assault occurred around 2 am on April 4 in a narrow lane in Sadduguntepalya and was captured on CCTV footage that quickly spread online.

The case reignited discussions on women's safety in the city. Public anger intensified after remarks by the Home Minister suggesting such incidents were common in big cities. Though he later clarified his statement, the damage was done.

Digital deception

If street crime shook the city, cybercrime exposed its most vulnerable side. On November 17, Bengaluru reported one of the biggest cyber fraud cases in the state. A 57-year-old senior IT executive was cheated of 31.83 crore through a year-long "digital arrest" scam.

The fraudsters impersonated officials from courier companies, cybercrime units, the CBI and even the Reserve Bank of India. The victim was threatened, isolated and kept under constant digital surveillance, even during hospitalisation. The scam, which began with a phone call in September 2024, continued until March 2025, making it the largest single loss in such cases in Karnataka. Government data revealed a worrying trend, with over 22,000 cyber fraud cases reported in both 2023 and 2024, and more than 13,000 cases in 2025 alone.

Hard lessons

As 2025 draws to a close, Bengaluru stands at a crossroads. The year exposed cracks in crowd management, urban safety and digital awareness. While swift police action in some cases offered reassurance, the scale and frequency of incidents underlined the need for deeper reforms. For a city that prides itself on progress, 2025 served as a sobering reminder that growth must go hand in hand with safety, accountability and trust.

Prepping for NYE

Tech takes charge as police lock down New Year crowds

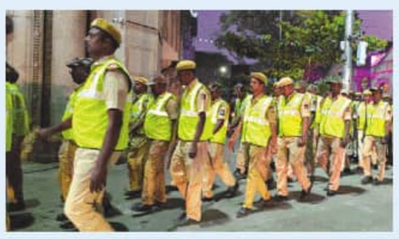
The Bengaluru City Police will deploy facial recognition cameras and AI-based crowd density cameras across the Central Business District on New Year's Eve to monitor crowds in real time and regulate movement dynamically. According to the police, over 400 police cameras, including advanced facial recognition systems, along with more than 3,000 private CCTV feeds, have been integrated into the Command Centre to ensure continuous surveillance. Camera coverage has been ensured at intervals of 50–100 metres, enabling authorities to assess crowd build-up instantly and control entry points based on live density analysis.

Crowd control

Police said AI-enabled crowd density cameras will play a key role in preventing congestion by allowing staggered entry into high-footfall zones such as Brigade Road and Church Street. Unlike previous years, free entry will not be allowed, and stationary crowding will be strictly prohibited. Continuous movement will be enforced to avoid bottlenecks, particularly near Cauvery Emporium and adjoining stretches. Kamaraj Road towards Kaveri Emporium will remain fully closed, the police added.

More than 3,000 personnel, including Civil Police, Armed Police, KSRP, Quick Response Teams, CSWAT units, Home Guards and Civil Defence staff, will be deployed across the CBD. Police said anti-stampede squads have been positioned to ensure smooth crowd flow, while fire tenders, ambulances and water jets have been stationed at strategic locations to respond to any emergency.

As part of the Celebrate Responsibly campaign, QR codes have been displayed across commercial areas, which have recorded over five lakh accesses in the last three days, police said. By scanning the codes, citizens can access the Bengaluru City Police website to locate women's help desks, watchtowers, police points, ambulances, emergency health centres and fire tenders, and get navigation assistance to the nearest help point during emergencies.



Police and home guards take out a parade ahead of the New Year eve security preparations, on Tuesday

Strict enforcement

The police have announced strict enforcement against drunk driving with intensive checks and have advised the public to use public transport. Random narcotics checks and testing will be conducted to curb drug consumption. The use of loudspeakers or high-decibel music on roads or vehicles is prohibited, and violations will invite strict action. Pubs and restaurants have been directed to follow police instructions, while bomb detection and disposal squads and anti-sabotage teams will be deployed across the CBD.

Several areas, including MG Road from Anil Kumble Circle to Mayo Hall, Brigade Road, Church Street and Museum Road, will be pedestrian-only zones from 8 pm on December 31 till 1 am on January 1. Bags, sharp objects and similar items will not be permitted, and frisking gates have been installed at Anil Kumble Circle, Kaveri Junction and Church Street City Police have urged residents to head home early, avoid the CBD after midnight, plan travel in advance, steer clear of crowded areas and follow instructions for a safe New Year. -BMB

Outskirts turn party hotspots this new year

As Bengaluru gears up to welcome 2026, New Year celebrations are increasingly shifting out of the city and into its outskirts, with revellers opting for resorts, clubs and private gardens to avoid police checks and neighbourhood complaints. From Devanahalli to Kanakapura Road, party venues nearly 50–60 km from the city are witnessing brisk bookings, especially among youngsters and corporate groups.

Star hotels, resorts, clubs, convention halls and private estates are lining up open-air concerts, celebrity DJs, fashion shows, live food and bar counters, fire shows and audio-visual acts, with entry fees ranging from 500 to 10,000.

Sources said the rush has been strong, with most venues in the city and its outskirts booked days in advance. A techie said his team chose a resort on the outskirts for an "unrestricted, stress-free celebration" starting on the evening of December 31, featuring DJ music, dance, food, liquor and fireworks.

The Excise Department is expecting revenue of over 250 crore from a single day of New Year celebrations. Hotel Owners' Association president PC Rao said establishments had sought permission to operate till 2 am, but approvals have been granted only till 1 am, with strict compliance mandated. New Year brings peak business for pubs and bars, tight police guidelines mean only rule-compliant venues are likely to benefit this season. -BMB

Smartphone, creepy usage

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

can attract criminal liability, especially if the footage is shared or used in a sexualised or voyeuristic manner. Advocate Sandeep Kulkarni explained, "Indian law does recognise a person's right to privacy. Filming someone surreptitiously, particularly with an intent to invade privacy or harass, can fall under provisions of the Information Technology Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)."

Urban safety experts argue that incidents like these also reflect broader societal issues. Sociologist Dr Ananya Rao noted that women often alter their behaviour in public spaces due to fear of being watched or recorded. "When women feel they are constantly under surveillance, it restricts their freedom and reinforces unequal power dynamics in society," she said.

The incident has sparked fresh discussions online about the need for greater awareness, stricter enforcement of existing laws and collective responsibility from bystanders. Many residents argue that busy, well-lit areas such as Church Street should feel safe for everyone, and that tackling such behaviour requires both legal action and a strong social response that clearly condemns violations of consent and privacy.

Archaeology & ecology

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

between lower and higher trophic levels of the food chain, and thus, their species richness is important for a healthy ecosystem.

Moreover, the abundance of lizard populations in the historical fort calls for special concern for care because of their archaeological importance and because they will be of use for urban planning and conservation.

"Lizards consume a large amount of insects, including those harmful to various crops or that spread disease. They are also an important food source for larger animals. Species richness and diversity of lizards indicate a healthy ecosystem, and thus it is important to maintain a good population of lizards," noted Rajashekara.

Experts say maintaining reptile diversity in historical monuments such as forts, temples, and archeological sites is also important, as they are found to be more distinct than the rest of the urban landscapes.

Based on the outcome of the survey, researchers say measures for the conservation and welfare of the reptilian fauna in the Devanahalli Fort, including restricting activities such as mowing the grasses, cutting trees, removing dead wood logs, dumping garbage, and human interventions during the breeding season of the reptiles.

"Grazing of domestic animals, such as cattle, goats, and sheep, should be avoided during the breeding period for the conservation of grasses that are used for nesting. The ancient trees standing in these green patches should be identified and conserved as they should be afforested with nectar-yielding flower plants and fruit-yielding local tree species," researchers suggested.

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I, N RAMANJANAPPA, R/at No. 75, 2nd Cross, Rayapura, J J R Nagar, Bengaluru-560018, here by declare that N RAMANJANAPPA and SHEKAR .N, both the names belongs to me only, vide affidavit dt: 30.12.2025, before notary V. Rajashekhara, B.lore

I, Samyuktha Badri, D/o K Badri, R/o No.002, Sai Mythri Comforts, 1st Main, Sarbouma Nagar Vijaya Bank Layout, Arekere, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru 560076 have changed my name from B Samyuktha to Samyuktha Badri vide affidavit No IN-KA28610034304318X dated 29.12.2025 for all the purpose.

I, Vineeth Kumar Goyal S/O Girish Kumar R/o C-303 Pyramid Temple Bells Apmt, 16th Cross Rd, Ideal Homes Layout, Kenchenhalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Bangalore 560098 have changed my name to Vineeth Goyal.

I Rushita Rakesh Jaiswal R/o Epitome Elan Appointment, C-1011, 10 Floor, C Wing, 80ft Rd, Kothanur, JP Nagar, 8th Phase Bengaluru 560076 Have Changed My Name to Rushita Mittal Joshi I Shall Be Called by This Name for All Purpose.

I, Samrudh Karkada Shashi Kiran S/o K S Shashi Kiran R/o 1548, 18th Main Rd, Muneshwara Block, B'luru-560026 have changed my name to Samrudh Aithaal Karkada Shashi Kiran

I R M Meena W/O T D Ramalingam R/O # 45, 2nd cross, venkateshwara layout, S G Palya Bangalore - 560029 have changed my name to R M Meenaa for all purpose.

I, Priyadarshini Brahmachari W/o Vikram Keshari Brahmachari R/o no:219, Radiant lotus, Kodichikkanahalli, Bangalore-560076, have changed my name to Priyadarshini Sethi.

I, Mukthiar Pasha, R/a #16, 13th Cross, Arabic College, Bangalore 560045. I have changed my name to Sheik Mukthar. Vide affidavit dtd 29/12/25 sworn before notary Leela Bangalore.

I Supi Abdul Aleel S/O, M Soopi R/o Nokya Village And Post Thithimathi Hobli Ponnampet Taluk Kodagu Karnataka Pin 571254 have changed my name to Abdul Jaleel Ms.

I, Anbarasu Narayana Sampath Kumar R/o #872 10th Cross Kawteera Vanagar B'lore-560096 have changed my name to Anbarasu.

I, Shruthi Manoj Kumar W/o Manoj Kumar R R/o #14, Doddabommasandra Vidyaranyapura B'luru-560097 have changed my name to Shruthi K for all purposes.

I, Mable Maria Hanglur D Mello R/o #15193, Prestige Finsbury Park Regent, Gummanhalli Baglur, B'luru-562149 have changed my name to Mable Maria Serao.

I, M Noorullah S/o Mustafa Basha # 22 4 th main road Kausar Nagar Blr-32 have changed my name to Noorulla for all purposes.

I, Mohammed Roushan S/O A sleem Pasha # 9 Bharathinagar Blr-01 have changed my name to Mohammed Roshan Pasha for all purposes.

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The silence after species vanish

Sixth mass extinction is erasing not only biodiversity but humanity's, cultural stories and spiritual ties

The millions of species humans share the world with are valuable in their own right. When one species is lost, it has a ripple effect throughout the ecosystems it existed within.

But there is a hidden toll. Each loss takes something from humanity too. Extinction silences scientific insights, ends cultural traditions and snuffs out spiritual connections that enrich human life.

For instance, when China's baiji river dolphin vanished, local memory of it faded within a single generation. When New Zealand's giant, flightless moa were hunted to extinction, the words and bodies of knowledge associated with them began to fade.

In these ways, conservation is as much about safeguarding knowledge as it is about saving nature, as I suggest in my research.

We are currently living through what scientists call the planet's sixth mass extinction. Unlike earlier events triggered by natural catastrophes, today's accelerating losses are overwhelmingly driven by human activities, from habitat destruction and introduced species to climate change. Current extinction rates are tens to hundreds of times higher than natural levels. The United Nations warns that up to one million species may disappear this century, many within decades.

This extinction crisis is not just a loss to broader nature – it is a loss for humans.

Lost to science

Extinction extinguishes the light of knowledge nowhere more clearly than in science.

Every species has a unique genetic code and ecological role. When it vanishes, the world loses an untapped reservoir of scientific knowledge – genetic blueprints, biochemical pathways, ecological relationships and even potential medical treatments.

The two species of gastric-brooding frog once lived in small patches of rainforest in Queensland. These extraordinary frogs could turn their stomachs into wombs, shutting down gastric acid production to safely brood their young tadpoles internally. Both went extinct in the 1980s under pressure from human development and the introduced chytrid fungus. Their unique reproductive biology is gone forever. No other frog is known to do this.

Studying these biological marvels could have yielded insights into human conditions such as acid reflux and certain cancers. Ecologists Gerardo Ceballos and Paul Ehrlich called their extinction a tragic loss for science, lamenting: "Now they are lost to us as experimental models." Efforts at de-extinction have so far not succeeded.

> "As nature's voices fade, spiritual bonds weaken, reducing awe, reverence and humanity's sense of belonging

Biodiversity holds immense potential for breakthroughs in medicine, agriculture, materials science and even climate change mitigation. As species vanish, the library of life shrinks and, with it, the vault of future human discoveries.

Lost to culture

Nature is deeply woven through many human cultures. First Nations people living on traditional lands hold detailed knowledge of local species in language, story and ceremony. Many urban residents orient their lives around local birds, trees, rivers and parks.

Extinction erodes our sense of companionship with the natural world and diminishes the countless small interactions with other species that help root our lives in joy, wonder and reverence.

The planet is singing – everywhere. But what's happening is we're killing the voices […] It's like plucking the instruments out of the orchestra … and then it's gone.

One haunting example of a vanished voice comes from Hawai'i. In 2023, a small black-and-yellow songbird, the Kaua i , was declared extinct. All that remains is a final recording, in which the last male sings for a female who will never come.

Disturbingly, birdsong is declining worldwide, diminishing the richness of our shared sensory world.

From an ecocentric perspective, each loss leaves the whole community of companion species poorer – humans included. Scientists call this the "extinction of experience". As biologist David George Haskell writes, extinction is leaving the future with: an impoverished sensory world […] less vital, blander.

The loss of species is not only an ecological crisis but also a rupture in the communion of life – a deep injury to the bonds uniting beings.

Loss of spiritual knowledge

For many communities, nature is imbued with sacred meaning. Often, particular species or ecosystems hold deep spiritual significance.

Australia's Great Barrier Reef is venerated by Indigenous custodians, whose traditions describe it as part of a sacred, living seascape. As the reef's biodiversity declines under climate stress, these spiritual connections are eroding, diminishing the sources of wonder, reverence and existential orientation that help define human belonging in the world – across and beyond faith traditions.

Some ecotheological traditions regard nature as a book – a means of revealing divine truth alongside scripture. Nature holds deep significance for varied communities and traditions that view the land and its creatures as sentient, interconnected and sacred.

In this sense, extinction is more than biological loss: it severs spiritual ties between humans and other beings in ways that transcend worldviews.

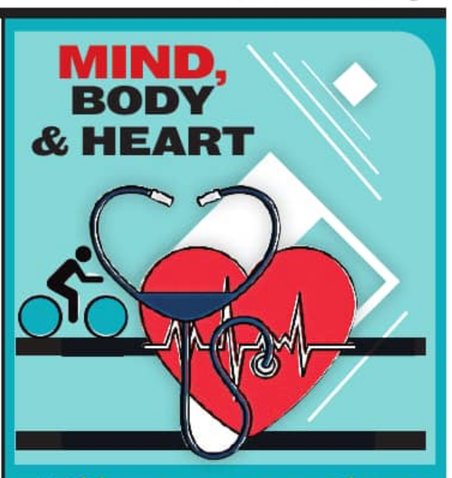
How do we grieve extinction?

Extinctions often evoke grief, which is a way of knowing through feeling. Grieving a lost species points to the scale of loss across scientific, cultural and spiritual dimensions.

For Indigenous communities, this grief can be profound, born of deep environmental attachment. Scientists and conservationists witness cascading losses and bear the burden of foresight. Their grief may trigger anxiety, burnout and sorrow. But mourning the loss also makes the crisis tangible.

Grieving for extinct life is not pointless. It can compel us to look closely at what remains, to recognise the intrinsic value of a species and to resist reducing biodiversity to instrumental use. This kind of mourning carries the seeds of ecological responsibility, inviting us to protect life not just for our purposes but because of its irreplaceable role in the communion of life.

(By Johannes M Luetz, UNSW Sydney, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

5-4-3-2-1 technique

Anxiety rarely announces itself politely. It slips into ordinary moments—waiting for a reply, scrolling late at night, standing in a crowded room, or lying awake as thoughts race ahead. Your heart feels loud, your chest tightens, and your mind jumps to worst-case scenarios before you even know why.
In these moments, advice to "just relax" or "think positive" feels hollow. What actually helps is something simple, immediate and grounding—something that brings you back into your body and out of the mental spiral.
That's where the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique comes in. This method doesn't ask you to analyse or fight anxiety. Instead, it gently shifts your attention to the present moment using your senses, which helps calm the nervous system and interrupt anxious loops. You don't need tools, preparation or privacy—you can use it anywhere.

How to do it:
5 things you can see:
Look around and name five visible details, even ordinary ones. Let your eyes rest on each briefly.

4 things you can feel:
Notice four physical sensations—your feet on the floor, the chair supporting you, fabric on your skin, or your breath moving.

3 things you can hear:
Identify three sounds, near or far. If it's quiet, notice the silence.

2 things you can smell:
Find two scents around you, or think of two comforting smells if none are obvious.

1 thing you can taste:
Notice a lingering taste, or take a sip of water and focus on it.
You may not feel instantly calm, and that's okay. The aim isn't to erase anxiety, but to reduce its intensity and regain control. With practice, your body begins to recognise this technique as a signal of safety—making anxious moments easier to manage.

–Femina

MIRRORLIGHTS

Swear words may supercharge strength and endurance, Researchers say

Swearing could boost physical performance by helping people overcome inhibitions, feel focused and push harder during tests of strength and endurance, according to a study.
While cursing is socially frowned upon, earlier research has suggested that the cathartic use of expletives can reduce anxiety and stress, enhance memory and even improve physical performance, though excessive use may reduce their impact.
"But the question is — how is swearing helping us? What's the psychological mechanism?" said study author Richard Stephens, senior lecturer in psychology at Keele University in the UK.
Published in the journal American Psychologist, the study examined 192 participants who were asked to perform chair push-ups while repeating either a curse word of their choice or a neutral word every two seconds.
Participants later answered questions about their mental state during the task, including feelings of disinhibition, positive emotions and humour. The researchers also assessed psychological "flow" — a mental state in which people feel fully immersed and focused in an activity.
"These findings help explain why swearing is so commonplace. It is a calorie-neutral, drug-free, low-cost and readily available tool when a performance boost is needed," Stephens said.
Swearing, he explained, can help individuals feel more confident, focused and less distracted, allowing them to push harder.
Combining the findings with earlier research, the authors concluded that swearing increases psychological flow and self-confidence — key aspects of disinhibition — with potential implications for athletic performance, rehabilitation and situations requiring courage or assertiveness. **–APA**

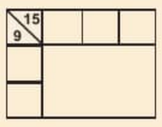
Chai-Time

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

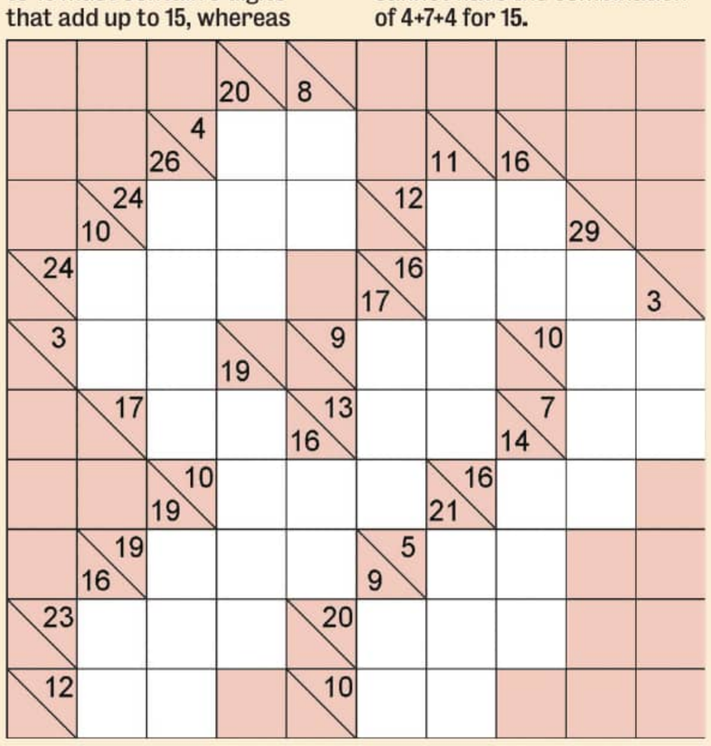
$2^4 / (7^0 + 3^0)^3 = ?$

Kakuro

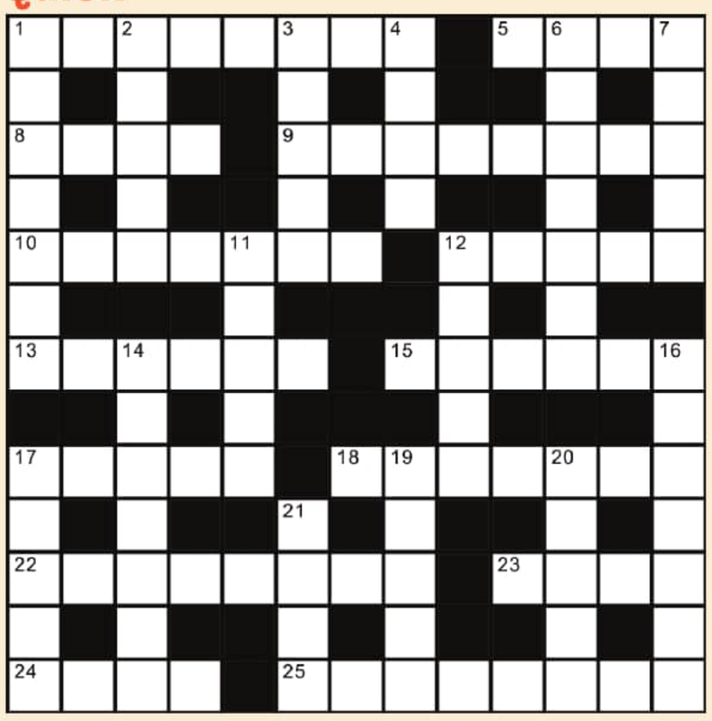
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 On the ___ : not quick, rather dullish? (4,4)
5 Spiritual teacher (4)
8 Whit or jot (4)
9 Tilted, unbalanced (8)
10 A ten-sided geometric figure (7)
12 Big (5)
13 ___ City: Bangalore of course (6)
15 Lay to rest (6)
17 One month of the Jewish calendar (5)
18 Maroon (7)
22 Managing not to sink? (8)
23 Bollywood's and TV's ___ Nath (4)
24 Sand hill (4)
25 Retaliates against or punishes? (4,4)

DOWN

1 Lively party (7)
2 Of the eye (5)
3 Innuit dwelling (5)
4 Catch sight of (4)
6 Experience (7)
7 Excessive (5)
11 Inexperienced (5)
12 Late Mrs. Paul McCartney (5)
14 Resident of Rostov? (7)
16 Capital of Thailand (7)
17 Closely sniffed at (5)
19 Loose or bulging out? (5)
20 Wide river-mouth (5)
21 Thin strand of hair (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: L EQUALS T

LYU EBGQZ DIO BOQV WU AGIMTUZ WV IDLPBO, OBL WV DBOLUJTQILPBO. LYU YIOZ PM LYU DKLLPOA UZAU BR LYU JPOZ.

Linemaro

Your heart is my pinata

Mindchow

We are more often frightened than hurt; and we suffer more from imagination than from reality

Joke of the day

One reason I don't drink is I want to know when I am having a good time

Loop

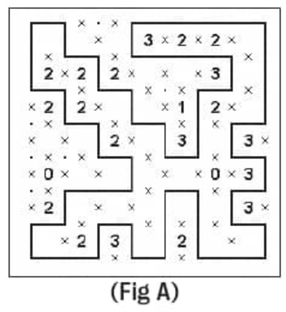
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

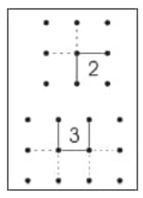
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

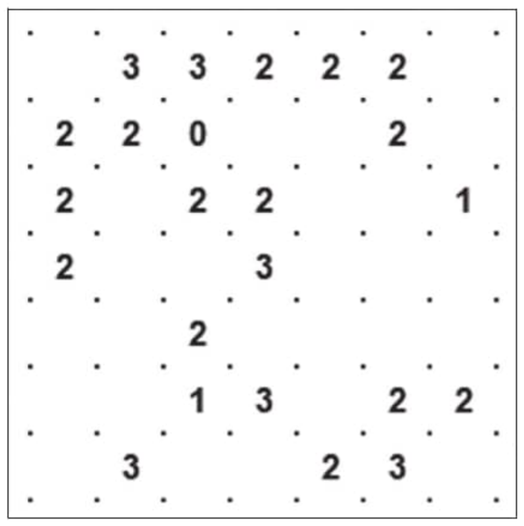
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



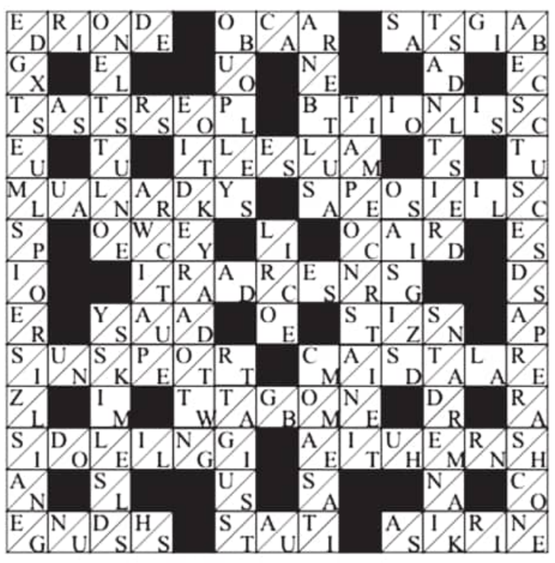
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



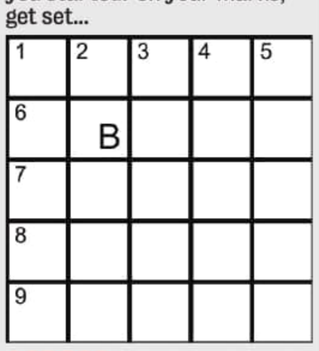
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Pasta; 6 U-boat; 7 An pad; 8 Sic ad; 9 Hooks

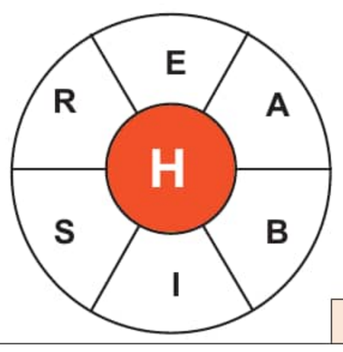
DOWN

1 As pap; 2 Sabah; 3 No dot; 4 I a duo; 5 Tacks

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the blank and completes the sequence?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **12** Good; **14** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	2	5					4	
				6	7	3		
6	7		3			8		
	5	7				1		6
				4				
9		1				4	8	
		6			9		5	4
		4	7	3				
	1					9	6	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

= 3

1 4 7 7

Medium

= 14

8 8 8 6

Hard

= 13

1 2 3 4

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

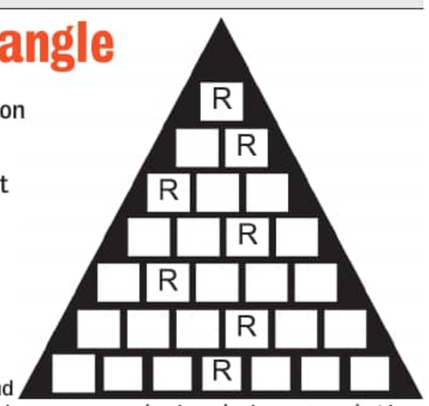
Differences: 1. Nametag is lower. 2. Girl's collar is different. 3. Hairband is moved. 4. Thumb is showing. 5. Man's sleeve is longer. 6. Window is smaller.

Riddler

Every clue below can be answered with a two word phrase in which each word contains OR. Your job is to figure out what they are. **1.** Piece of paper you fill out in a catalog **2.** Twining plant with funnel-shaped flowers **3.** Pyongyang's country **4.** Neighborhood place to buy a quart of milk

Alpha triangle

1 18th letter
2 Sound of hesitation
3 Female ruff
4 Simply
5 _ de la _, the best
6 Punish legally
7 Hug



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye

YOU MUS' BE NERTS GIVIN' UP POPEYE FER A KING!
DON'T BE SILLY!
I'LL BE A QUEEN! I'LL WEAR A CROWN!!
I'LL HAVE DIAMONDS, PEARLS AND EMERALDS TO WALLOW IN!
I SUSPOSE A DAME WOULD THINK THAT WAS BETTER THAN FISHIN' FER HALIBUTS!
popeye.com
4-1

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

HOW DID THE DOOR LOCK?!
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO! THE BOX WAS SUPPOSED TO PROP THE DOOR OPEN!
OOOH... THAT'S WHAT THAT WAS FOR?
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US ABOUT THE BOX?!
I FORGOT! I WAS IN THE MOMENT!!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

%#*! I MESSED UP!
OOPS! SORRY!
DON'T WORRY... WHAT HAPPENS AT ST. SPIRES CHOIR PRACTICE STAYS AT ST. SPIRES CHOIR PRACTICE.
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BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
9-20

Mutts

MOOCH, I WISH WE HAD BOOKSMARTS
HA! I HAVE BOOKSHMARTS!
I SHLEPT ON A DICTIONARY LAST NIGHT AND MY BACK IS KILLING ME!
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com
9-20

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

As the year concludes, your innate need for order and finality is satisfied. Take time to formally close out all minor tasks, clearing your slate for January 1. This act of definitive completion is your gift to your future self. Plan your first strategic move for the New Year with meticulous care. Success awaits your organised ascent.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

Embrace spontaneity and leap into new opportunities–trust instincts as 2026 arrives. Celebrate unexpected chances with boldness and optimism; fresh beginnings favour courage and adventurous choices for meaningful growth ahead.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

Reflect on achievements and appreciate hard work; set intentions for continued success in 2026. Honour lessons learned and plan steady progress with grounded goals, your practical approach builds lasting momentum for next year.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Connect deeply with loved ones, share meaningful conversations and memories as 2026 arrives. Strengthen bonds, celebrate shared history, and step into the new year carrying warmth, connection, and renewed closeness.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

Seek inner healing and self-care to enter 2026 balanced; spend time in reflective practices. Nurture emotional well-being and gently prepare for upcoming adventures with restored clarity and strengthened resilience.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Shine brightly into 2026, celebrate achievements and step forward with charisma. Your confidence inspires others; launch into the new year with bold enthusiasm and a triumphant spirit to pursue big goals.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

Organise thoughts and plan with clarity for a purposeful 2026 start. Prioritise mental wellbeing and structure ambitions; disciplined planning primes you for a focused, productive new year ahead.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

Cultivate harmony and balance as 2026 begins, nurture relationships and personal pursuits. Aim for equilibrium in priorities and interactions to sustain peace and meaningful growth throughout the coming year.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

Transformative reflection suits December 31. Use deep introspection to envision the powerful changes you wish to manifest in 2026. Set intent with courage and prepare for profound personal evolution ahead.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

Seek adventure and welcome freedom entering 2026. Embrace spontaneity and exploration. Step into the unknown with optimism, curiosity, and a willingness to learn from every new experience that comes your way.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

Reflect on accomplishments, set realistic goals, and build on strong foundations for 2026. Acknowledge hard work and plan methodically, ensuring steady progress and sustainable achievement throughout next year.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

Connect with community and shared visions as 2026 approaches, collaborate with like-minded individuals to create meaningful impact. Shared efforts multiply success and inspire collective momentum for the new year.

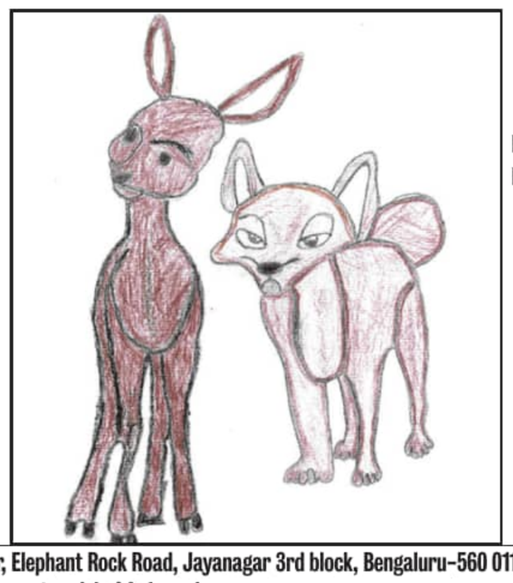
Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

Trust intuition and set spiritually aligned intentions for 2026. Quiet reflection invites guidance, use inner wisdom to shape goals that nourish your soul and guide meaningful, heartfelt choices in the coming year.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE

Sanjanna, Bengaluru



Poojitha, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

16 / (1+1)³=
16 / (2)³=
16 / 8 =
2

BULL'S EYE

bash, BEARISH, brash, hair, hare, hear, heir, herb, hire, rash, rhea, share, shear, shire

QUOTE UNCODE

The world can only be grasped by action, not by contemplation. The hand is the cutting edge of the mind.

FAST FIVE

P	A	T	A	S
A	B	O	U	T
A	S	D	I	C
P	A	N	D	A
S	H	O	O	K

STRIKE OUT

E	R	N	E	B	A	R	■	A	S	I	A	N
X	■	E	■	U	■	E	■	A	■	C	■	O
T	A	S	S	E	L	■	B	I	O	N	I	C
E	■	T	■	I	L	E	U	M	■	T	■	U
M	A	L	A	D	Y	■	S	P	O	I	L	S
P	■	E	C	E	■	I	■	O	A	R	■	E
O	■	T	R	A	C	E	R	S	■	T	■	D
R	■	S	U	D	■	E	■	T	I	S	■	P
I	N	K	P	O	T	■	C	A	S	T	L	E
Z	■	I	■	W	A	G	O	N	■	R	■	R
N	I	M	G	■	A	T	H	E	N	S	■	■
S	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	■	A	L	O	K
C	■	S	■	■	W	■	■	E	■	■	■	G
N	I	S	A	N	■	A	B	A	N	D	O	N
A	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	D	■	■	■	A
G	A	R	D	E	N	■	E	N	T	O	M	B
I	■	■	■	R	■	■	I	■	G	■	■	E
D	E	C	A	G	O	N	■	L	A	R	G	E
N	■	I	■	O	■	Y	■	■	E	■	■	U
I	O	T	A	■	L	O	P	S	I	D	E	D
H	■	P	■	G	■	S	■	■	N	■	■	N
S	L	O	W	S	I	D	E	■	G	U	R	U

QUICK

D	U	N	E	■	P	A	Y	S	B	A	C	K
E	■	A	■	S	■	G	■	■	■	T	■	O
S	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	■	A	L	O	K
C	■	S	■	■	W	■	A	■	■	E	■	G
N	I	S	A	N	■	A	B	A	N	D	O	N
A	■	■	■	U	■	■	■	D	■	■	■	A
G	A	R	D	E	N	■	E	N	T	O	M	B
I	■	■	■	R	■	■	I	■	G	■	■	E
D	E	C	A	G	O	N	■	L	A	R	G	E
N	■	I	■	O	■	Y	■	■	E	■	■	U
I	O	T	A	■	L	O	P	S	I	D	E	D
H	■	P	■	G	■	S	■	■	N	■	■	N
S	L	O	W	S	I	D	E	■	G	U	R	U

MENSA PUZZLE

K. Letters in the left hand column move through the alphabet, skipping letters written without curves, letters in the right hand column skip letters with curves.

RIDDLER

1. Order Form,
2. Morning Glory,
3. North Korea &
4. Corner Store

SUDOKU

3	2	5	9	1	8	6	4	7
1	4	8	2	6	7	3	9	5
6	7	9	3	5	4	8	2	1
4	5	7	8	9	2	1	3	6
2	8	3	6	4	1	5	7	9
9	6	1	5	7	3	4	8	2
8	3	6	1	2	9	7	5	4
5	9	4	7	3	6	2	1	8
7	1	2	4	8	5	9	6	3

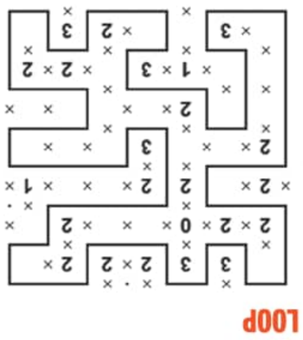
ALPHA TRIANGLE

Easy
4 + 7 − 1 − 7 = 3
Medium
8 + 6 − 8 + 8 = 14
Hard
4 + 3 x 2 − 1 = 13

GO FIGURE

R, Er, Ree, Mere, Creme, Amerce, Embrace.

LOOP



KAKURO

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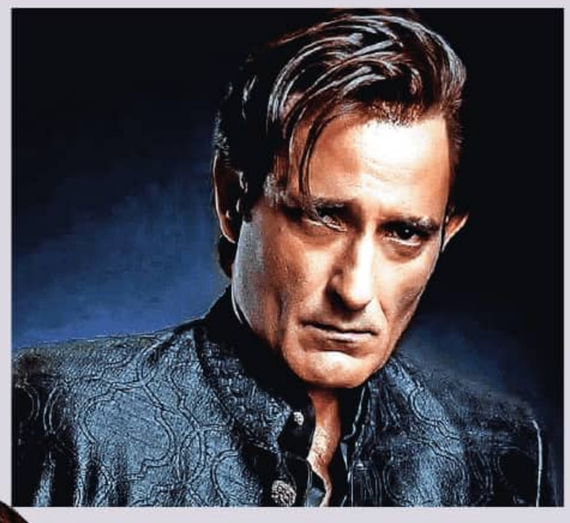
 # France calling
George Clooney, his wife Amal and their children obtain French citizenship

Bollywood 2025: Casting clashes, walkouts and power struggles behind the scenes

Celebs make sure that real life is more thrilling than reel world

By 2025, Bollywood proved once again that its most gripping dramas don't always unfold on the big screen. While the year delivered record-breaking box office numbers with films like Dhurandhar, Chhaava and Saiyaara, it also exposed the fragile ecosystem behind them—one where contracts collapse, egos clash, principles collide, and silence often speaks louder than official statements. From high-profile exits and legal threats to public interviews that reignited industry-wide debates, casting controversies dominated headlines throughout the year.



Major franchises such as Hera Pheri, Drishyam, Don and Kalki 2898 AD found themselves battling turbulence not from critics or audiences, but from within. At the centre of the most layered and socially resonant controversy of 2025 was Deepika Padukone—an actress at the peak of her global and domestic influence.

The storm began when reports surfaced that Deepika had walked out of Spirit, Sandeep Reddy Vanga's much-anticipated film starring Prabhas. According to industry insiders, the exit stemmed from her insistence on an eight-hour workday, a demand that was allegedly not accepted by the director. What followed escalated rapidly. Vanga reportedly replaced her with Triptii Dimri and hinted, through cryptic remarks, at a "breach of trust" and even a possible script leak.

Months later, the makers of Kalki 2898 AD announced that Deepika would not be returning for the sequel, citing their inability to find a "partnership" with the actress. Given her pivotal role in the first film, the announcement raised eyebrows and reignited speculation about whether her professional stance had quietly cost her major projects. Deepika finally addressed the issue indirectly in an interview, saying, "If, by virtue of being a woman, that's coming across as being pushy, then so be it," adding that male superstars had worked eight-hour shifts for years. Her remarks transformed a casting dispute into a broader conversation on gender parity, work-life balance and double standards in Bollywood.

Another shockwave hit fans when Paresh Rawal reportedly exited Hera Pheri 3. In a public clarification, he denied creative differences and expressed respect for director Priyadarshan. The situation intensified when reports claimed Akshay Kumar had initiated legal action over contractual losses. Just days later, Rawal returned to the project, abruptly ending one of the year's most dramatic casting sagas and underscoring how even legacy franchises are vulnerable to backstage turmoil.

As 2025 drew to a close, Akshaye Khanna's reported exit from Drishyam 3 triggered unusually blunt public statements from producer Kumar Mangat Pathak, who accused the actor of backing out after signing a contract and accepting an advance. Akshaye was replaced by Jaideep Ahlawat, leaving fans stunned given the popularity of his character.

Ranveer Singh reportedly stepped away from Don 3 over remuneration and creative differences, while Saif Ali Khan's fallout with the Taurani camp allegedly cost him a role in the Race franchise.

These episodes made one thing clear: Bollywood's biggest conflicts no longer stay behind closed doors.

–ETimes

Amanda Seyfried finds uncanny bond on screen

Amanda Seyfried has said she shares an "uncanny" similarity with her co-star Sydney Sweeney, describing their connection as both natural and refreshing while working on the upcoming mystery-thriller The Housemaid.

Speaking to the BBC, Seyfried said the bond between the two actresses goes beyond the screen. "There's a similarity between us that is uncanny, and it's really fun to work with people who are doing life in a similar way and have similar ideals about the job and life," she said. According to Seyfried, that shared outlook made their collaboration especially rewarding.

In The Housemaid, Seyfried plays a troubled housewife grappling with mental health issues—a role she described as demanding and emotionally complex. She explained that authenticity was key to portraying the character. "You have to play it as realistic as possible because it needs to reflect real life," she said, adding that the responsibility of representing such struggles truthfully was not something she took lightly.

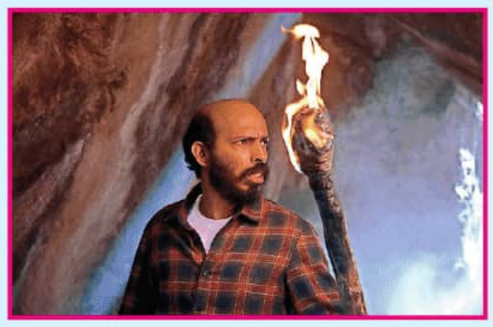
Earlier this month, Seyfried also spoke warmly about Sweeney in an interview with Vanity Fair, calling her co-star a "sweetheart" and praising her generosity and kindness. She acknowledged the immense pressure Sweeney faces amid her rapid rise to fame, noting that such intense attention can be harmful. Drawing from her own experiences and those of her Mean Girls co-star Lindsay Lohan, Seyfried said overnight stardom can be "dangerous," regardless of whether the attention is positive or negative.

Despite these concerns, Seyfried said she deeply admires how Sweeney handles the spotlight. "She always shows up for work with a smile, even if she's miserable," she said. "I hope she doesn't harden. I just want to keep watching her work." Seyfried added that she feels grateful to have worked with strong, supportive women throughout her career—actors who continue to champion one another both on and off screen.

–ETimes

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Spooky teaser



The teaser of Rakkasapuradhol, the latest film starring Raj B Shetty, has been unveiled, with the makers confirming a theatrical release on February 6. The teaser has drawn attention within the industry, with Kichcha Sudeep taking to X to praise its quality.

Directed by Ravi Saranga, the film is inspired by a real incident and explores the duality of human nature. Backed by renowned action choreographer Dr K Ravi Varma, the film promises a gritty and intense cinematic experience.

Raj Shetty's upcoming film Landlord is set for release soon, while his recent outing 45, which released on December 25, is reportedly performing well across the state. Rakkasapuradhol marks the first time Shetty plays a police officer, a transformation that director Ravi Saranga says will surprise audiences. The teaser is set in a village with a few thousand inhabitants and weaves together themes of death, fear, black magic, superstition, and social tension.

Psychological thriller

Post-production work is underway for Vikalpa, a psychological thriller that is expected to hit theatres within the next few weeks. The film promises to explore dormant human emotions while navigating the fragile space between reality and fiction.

Prithviraj Patil, who works with a multinational company in the city, makes a dual debut with Vikalpa —as its director and lead actor. Having been involved in amateur theatre for over two decades, Patil believes his experience with performance and storytelling has shaped the film's narrative depth. He says content-driven cinema has found acceptance among Kannada audiences, and Vikalpa carries similar potential. The film features newcomers, with Indira Swamy backing the project under the Surose Talkies banner. Patil noted that psychological thrillers remain relatively unexplored in Sandalwood. "The title reflects a state between reality and imagination. Though it is a psychological thriller, the film also carries elements of comedy," he said.